



West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain



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sans parler du danger direct de certains produits. Les auteurs recommandent d'accroître la surface des réserves, puisque les limicoles n'y trouvent pas toute la nourriture nécessaire et de surveiller l'usage des pesticides.

Nous recommandons vivement cette publication.

G.J. Morel

ISLAND AFRICA by Jonathan Kingdon, 1990. 287 pp. Collins, London. £25, ISBN 0-00-219443-0.

I could recommend this book for the colour plates alone: the 30 or so intricate paintings illustrate a variety of biological points in Jonathan Kingdon's typically colourful, if somewhat stylised way. Many of his sketches, as well as numerous maps and diagrams also accompany the text.

The book is subtitled 'The evolution of Africa's rare plants and animals' and it begins with a chapter on endemism: centres of endemism are the 'islands' of the title whose rare flora and fauna concern most of the book, which deals with sub-saharan Africa. For West Africa, there are chapters on Upper Guinea and the Bight of Biafra; the Gulf of Guinea Islands, montane Cameroun and some rivers and lakes are also described in detail. Examples from a wide range of flora and fauna are included and there are therefore many fascinating accounts outside the ornithologist's immediate sphere of interest. Gaining more than a tantalising introduction is, however, difficult; there is no bibliography and the few brief references in the text are so short as to be untraceable. Another major criticism is that none of the plates or text diagrams is numbered and they are rarely directly referred to in the text; the colour plates, in particular, lose much of their point unless one does as I did, and looked through them several times in advance.

There are a number of small errors, particularly in nomenclature, and I doubt the value of Appendix 1, of 'Typical endemic species...' for various regions, as the lists are so incomplete. However, the overall wealth of fascinating detail which Kingdon has assembled makes up for this. His concluding chapters describe man-made islands - reserves and national parks - and develop the theme of conservation. It is hoped that this book will bring home to a wide audience the importance of ensuring the preservation of Africa's rarer and lesser-known wildlife and plants.

Hilary Tye